

Agricultural Marketing Service
Office of the Deputy Administrator
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Fresh Products Branch
Agricultural Marketing Specialist (General)
GS-1146-7

SJ FV40

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Field Office of the Fruit and Vegetable Division, Fresh Products Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent serves as an Agricultural Marketing Specialist and as such performs a variety of assignments concerning the handling, inspecting, grading, and packaging related to the subject products to provide input on the grading and inspection activities.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Applies instructional material, the official standards, and related regulations which govern the grading, inspection, and certification of products.

Selects representative samples from product lots in accordance with prescribed sampling procedures and plans.

Inspects the product to determine its quality, condition, and/or its compliance to other stated contract specifications. Typically, this requires considering such factors as:

- the product's size, shape, color, degree of firmness, and similar quality factors;
- the type, extent, and cause of any product defects or diseases;
- the quantity, packaging, or similar conditions which are common in contract specification.

Prepares the inspection reports. When the assignment involves products with which the employee is thoroughly knowledgeable, applies the official standards and regulations to determine the product's grade and/or condition and directly issues the certificate.

If necessary, explains determinations to the appropriate industry employee. In difficult or unusual cases, prepares a draft certificate with tentative determination and submits it for supervisory review before issuance.

As assigned, performs inspections and grading of products with which the employee is unfamiliar under the guidance of a senior employee.

III. JOB CONTROLS

A. Responsibility for the Work of Others: None

B. Supervision and Guidance Received:

Assignments involve making some final grade and condition determinations, and directly issuing certifications. Such determinations affect the product's price and/or acceptability in relation to contract specifications. Both factors affect the financial interests of buyers and sellers.

Guides include official grade standards, physical models and visual aids, agency instruction manuals, and supplemental technical and administrative directives.

The employee independently selects and applies the appropriate guides that, in most cases, are familiar. Borderline grading and inspection determinations, or assignments, involving products unfamiliar to the employee, are referred to the supervisor or senior grader for a decision.

The employee normally receives daily inspection and grading assignments from the supervisor who also assigns the priority of the individual assignments.

Recurring assignments (i.e., those involving products familiar to the employee) are performed without specific technical instructions. However, if unusual or difficult situations with the product arise, the supervisor is consulted for interpretation and guidance or for making the final determinations. Assignments involving a product which is new or unusual to the employee are normally performed under direct supervision and guidance.

The work is reviewed for technical accuracy and completeness through spot checks of inspection and grading while it is being performed and through review of inspection worksheets. Contacts include employees and managers of firms involved in fresh fruit and vegetable marketing such as receivers, vendors, brokers, and shippers. The purpose of the contacts is to promote and maintain cooperation and suitable working relations with the persons in the industry by explaining the agency program and resolving conflicts. This includes explaining and defending grade or conditions determinations. Schedules grading and inspection services in cooperation with industry personnel.